MARVEL

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN®

THE HUNGER

RAMOS/FAUCHER delgado

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THE HUNGER

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#1
RAMOS/FAUCHER delgado

GREENWICH VILLAGE,
FRIDAY, 11:02 PM

12 MONKEYS

Hey, Mom, it's me-- I just got out of work.

Don't worry-- everything's *fine.*

THE HUNGER

PART 1 OF 5

No, I gotta be at the doctor at seven. *Uh-huh.* Same old routine.

No... *uh-huh...* Mom, it's just a follow up. Look, I'll be home in twenty minutes -- we'll talk about it then.

Don't worry, I won't. Okay, bye.

Wh-who's that? Is someone there--

THUMP

AAH-!

Omigod!

Omigod... ≈huff≈ ...omigod--

--aa-uhh!

Oh, please... ≈snff≈... please don't hurt me... please...

Nn-*no!*

EEEK!

ME DRINK! I SPILLED ME BLOOMIN' DRINK!

Well, so much for a quiet neighborhood.

If I'd have known our Tenants' Association uses this space for their almost daily "Get-To-Know-You" parties whenever the weather gets above thirty degrees, I might have made alternate arrangements.

I can't help wondering if NASA has this kind of problem with people partying on their launch pads--

Okay... what's he doing now?

Is that the Hind-Lick maneuver?

Haw! Ha ha ha!

YIPYIPYIP

The crazy foreign guy, who lives in the apartment directly above me, is Big John Anderson. A likeable guy: possibly from New Zealand, possibly *Mars.*

Big John's hobbies include stomping on the ground and knocking things over. He likes to shout everything he says, even when he whispers. It makes him sound like the Crocodile Hunter on steroids.

The nice people in apartment 303 across the hall from me are the Papciaks-- suppliers of kielbasa sandwiches and pickled cabbage to a grateful apartment building.

The dog that barks at invisible objects is their Polish Water Spaniel, oddly named Spartacus. You ask me, *Spartacus* is to gladiatorial combat what Steve Urkel is to professional wrestling.

HEY, PARKO! WHERE YOU OFF TO?

Just going to fetch some ice, John.

NO WORRIES, MATE. I'LL LOOK AFTER YOUR BIRDS WHILE YOU'RE GONE, *EH?*

FILES

They're not my, *uh...*

...um.

Having handled that delicate incident with typical Parker sophistication, I return home for a brief getaway from the crowd.

Maybe it's me, but socializing was a lot easier in high school when three of us would sit around a table pretending to be half-elves in search of magic crystals.

Still, it's a change from swinging around the city-- it feels kinda neat to take a day off and hang with my neighbors.

Even a wall-crawler needs to plant his feet on the ground once in a while.

Hi--

SLAM!

Not all my neighbors are odd. Some are downright weird.

If I didn't know any better, I'd almost begin to think my life was becoming *normal*.

EH, IS THAT A ZIT?

SLAP!

OW!

GREENWICH VILLAGE, SATURDAY, 2:24 PM

When'd this happen, Jerry?

Ten to twelve hours ago, near as we can figure, Neil. Owner of a nearby store found the girl unconscious when he came by the alley to throw out the trash.

On the face of it, there's not much to go on-- she suffered some kind of trauma in the attack that's rendered her unconscious and we can't revive her. Rain's washed away some trace evidence... her money's still in her purse...

So why am I here? Doesn't this go to the catching detective on duty?

It went to detective Wilson, forty-seventh precinct. He's over by the storefront talking to the witness.

He thought you might want to know she has a couple of interesting bruises on her back, just above the kidneys...

Those aren't bruises-- they're *puncture marks.*

Looks like our guy's back in business.

I feel...

:koff:

I feel like I'm two people coming *apart.*

I'm not sure I *understand,* my son. Do you have something you want to confess?

Yeah, I want... :ah-hehh: I want so much to *tell* someone-- think about it every day, Father. But I don't think even *you* would understand.

You remember me, don't you? Eddie *Brock..?* :hrmm: I used to come by every Sunday... but things got messed up -- I mean *real* messed up.

I was gonna *kill* myself. I came here... :hrmm: this was a coupla years ago... I came to pray to God...

...to say *goodbye...*

What's happened to me... it's so complicated. :ah-ehh:

I think the Lord decided to *punish* me for my terrible sin.

I think he put a *demon* inside me.

ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL, QUEENS, SATURDAY, 4:30 PM

You didn't have to come today, dear...

This was my *fault,* Aunt May --the Green Goblin went after Flash because of me. Of course I had to come.

Oh, Peter... this is going to be such a difficult experience-- for *you* more than anyone. There's no knowing how much damage Flash has done to himself. He may well be terribly disfigured.

What's going to happen if you don't like what you *see?*

I *owe* it to him, Aunt May. Flash and I have been friends for so long... I figure we've seen each other through worse than this.

So whatever the damage to his face, I want to be able to look him in the eye and tell him that it doesn't make any difference.

And it *doesn't,* dear. I know you -- you're a good boy and you're strong. But you're *young.*

You may think a person needs good looks and charm and *muscles* to get through this life...

...but in the end, it's *love* that really counts.

I'm glad you could all attend today. I realize Flash can't communicate this to any of you, but I'm sure he's aware his friends are by his side.

Flash is a lucky man to have survived the injuries he sustained during his accident. At least four of his ribs were separated or fractured, as well as his right wrist, his pelvis, and both shins.

If Flash had been lucky enough never to have met me, if I'd never become Spider-Man, if Norman Osborne had never tried to kill my friend to get to me, well...

For a change, she's wrong... what you need in this world is *luck.*

His *face* was a different matter altogether...

Oh.

Oh, Peter... ~snff~... it's not fair. Why did it have to be this way?

We've got to make a promise, Liz: we don't give up on him, no matter what. He would never have given up on us.

Yeah... but promises are made of fine china-- they seem like they're worth something, but they're brittle, fragile. Easily ***broken.***

I never thought it would come down to this. In a way, this is the deepest cut of all. Flash's mind is gone, destroyed by the whim of a madman known as the Green Goblin.

But his cherished face is completely ***intact.***

Mister All-American rides again.

ST. JUDE'S HOSPITAL, GREENWICH VILLAGE, SATURDAY, 4:45 PM

Congratulations, Neil-- looks like your mysterious attacker got himself another victim.

Uh-huh... and what *about* it, Phil?

There's little doubt this is the work of the guy you've been looking for: same methodology, same type of attack. It's the ***injuries*** that don't make any sense.

We've got two small puncture wounds just above the kidneys that go right through to the adrenal glands. What's more, the glands appear to have been sucked ***dry,*** just as with the other two victims.

The resulting shock has sent her body into a coma, but I'll be darned if I know ***how.*** From a medical standpoint, I'd have to say this is virtually ***impossible.***

Jesus... do you have any idea what they're going to ask me back at the precinct?

I mean, c'mon, Phil, help me out here. What kind of psycho would ***attack*** a person in this manner?

I dunno... an animal?

Maybe a ***vampire.***

THE VAMPIRE? WHAT KIND OF DRONGO POOFTER NAME FOR A SERIAL KILLER IS THAT?

THE BLOODSUCKER... NOW *THAT'S* A NAME!

Mets lose nineteen straight

Affleck for the OSCAR

DAILY BUGLE

VAMPIRE STRIKES IN BROOKLYN

Serial killer leaves third victim parking lot

BACK HOME, WE GOT LEECHES THE SIZE OF DONKEYS -- THEY'D SUCK THE BRAINS OUT OF A SEVEN-FOOT MUDFISH IF YOU GAVE 'EM HALF A CHANCE.

Mm-hmm... and where is this mythical paradise you call home, John?

HEAVEN ON EARTH, GLORIA... HEAVEN ON EARTH.

YOU KNOW, OUR NATIONAL SPORTS ARE RUGBY AND BIKINI CONTESTS. RIGHT, RANDO?

Oh, uh... yeah. Sure, John.

I was just wondering.... where d'you think Peter went this afternoon?

I DUNNO, MATE. BUT HE'S MISSING THE SCENERY.

MIDTOWN, SATURDAY, 5:51 PM

I'm supposed to be punching someone.

I'm supposed to be sulking, or distracting myself in the company of friends. I'm supposed to be thinking about my friend, Flash, lying in a coma just because his life happened to intersect with mine.

But instead, I'm *here.*

RAMOS/FAUCHER

I'm here, there, and everywhere.

Like a spider circling a web of energy.

This is how it feels to have another *sense.*

AAAAAAHHHH!!!

When my alarms are engaged like this, every recess of my mind is attuned to my surroundings. The movement of time seems like a *taste.*

The air pulses with random noises-- little spikes of electrical discharge that strike at my nerve endings.

Telling me that something *bad* is about to happen.

Leading me here.

Hey! Can anyone *hear* me in there?

=huff=

Hang on!

Holy handbaskets--

Hey, ugly! Over here!

=uhf!=

Ehh... ahh... you'd better get out of here, pal. He hates it when someone interrupts his dinner--

UNINVITED YOU COME, SPIDER-MAN. BUT WELCOME.

WILL YOU HELP ME EASE THIS HUNGER?

Get out of here! *Hurry!*

I'm goin'! I'm goin'!

SMACK!

In the first moment of battle, I *feel* it. This creature that was once a man named Eddie Brock has *devolved.*

Our psychic link feels like a stab wound. Something has gone terribly wrong with his mind.

HMMF!

Where there was greed, now there is terrible hunger. Where there was desire, now there is a burning need.

It's not anger anymore... it's frustration. Unquenchable thirst.

Loneliness.

But most of all, *fear.*

WHY DO YOU TREMBLE, SPIDER-MAN? IS IT FEAR... OR ANTICIPATION?

... I'll take option C, Alex: "withering alien food breath." Look, I know you're after my blood, and all...

... I just don't think I'm your *type*--

--aah!

NOT JUST YOUR BLOOD, ARACHNID. YOUR MIND AND FLESH. YOUR SOUL--

I already have a girlfriend. And besides--

THWIP!

-- that suit makes your butt look enormous.

HRRNN!

CONSIDER YOUR BETRAYAL, SPIDER-MAN: YOU MADE ME INTO THE CREATURE THAT IS VENOM. I REFLECT YOUR MIND... BUT I CAN NO LONGER ENDURE IT...

HRRNN!

...I AM TORN BY LOVE AND HATRED, TRUST AND FEAR...

HRRNN!

...I AM EVERYTHING OF THIS WORLD...AND NOTHING. YOU BROUGHT ME HERE-- WHY WILL YOU NOT GRANT ME RELEASE--?

HH-AHH!

KRACK!

THE BEING THAT I WAS IS GONE...THE CHANGE IS COMPLETE...

...BUT I AM INCOMPLETE BECAUSE YOU HAVE MADE IT SO... I SUFFER FOR YOUR SIN--

...hhh...I never sinned against you, Eddie. It's all about you and the suit, dude-- you two are like an old married couple.

WHAM!

YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND, SPIDER-MAN...

...THERE IS NO MORE EDDIE.

#2

RAMOS
FAUCHER
delgado

MIDTOWN RAILWAY TUNNEL SATURDAY, 6:45 P.M.

Dear Green Goblin: Miss you terribly. Weather is nice. Have made a special new friend. Having fun on the train tracks. Wish you were here.

KRAK!

Instead of me.

WHY DO YOU RESIST ME, SPIDER-MAN? YOU ARE NOT MY ENEMY--

Ehh... I'd say your natural enemy is ***soap***--

HRRNN! HRRNN!

--oop.

42 nd

HRRRNNN!

B

Well, here we go again: Me and old Venom back to what we do best-- punching each others' lights out. And you have to wonder, don't you? About life, I mean.

SKRASHH!

If we're all on this crazy train to nowhere... how come I always get the caboose?

SPIDER-MAN, WAIT... ÷HSSK÷... UNDERSTAND THE OFFER I AM MAKING...

Gotta catch me first, slowpoke. You look like you're out of shape.

*Ha! "Out of **shape**"-- geddit? I cracked a funny!*

÷HSSK÷... ALWAYS YOUR LOATHSOME VOICE IN MY MIND... ÷HSSK÷... ALWAYS, THAT INCESSANT CLAMOR... ÷HSSK÷... THAT PITEOUS CRY FOR MY ATTENTION...

...HOW WILL IT STOP?

Zoloft?

THIS ODIOUS PLANET... IT CHATTERS LIKE BLOOD BURSTING FROM AN ARTERY... =HSSK=... AND ABOVE IT ALL, ALWAYS YOU AND YOUR UNWELCOME NOISE--

SMACK

IT DRAINS MY ESSENCE FROM ME--

Yeah? Well, when you come into our neck of the woods, alien boy, there's two things you don't mess with:

Number one... =mff= ...my sense of humor...

...an' number two, the 7:15 to Battery Park.

Behind you, by the way.

Battery

HRRNN! HRRNN!

WRETCH! DID YOU THINK--

OUCH.

HHRRNN!

Well, *that* was different.

Where'd he go?

Battery

HHRRRRNN!

Greenwich Village. Saturday, 9:10 P.M.

There, you see that? Two puncture marks just above the victim's kidneys. We'll get confirmation during the medical exam, but it sure looks like our perp.

I don't get it, Charlie-- there's obviously some kinda *process* at work here, but what kind of nut sends a message *this* way?

Beats me, Detective. I never eat fruitcake, and I never ask why it gets mad and attacks people.

UP

Yo! I gotta PBS comin' through! Get outta the way-- *move* it!

That *bad*, huh, Neil?

Hmm? Oh, hey, Cap. How you doin'?

Not so good. Thanks to this Vampire guy, the Precinct's a frickin' three-ring circus performing on the nightly news at six an' eleven. I figured I'd take a break... come get my hands dirty for a change.

Got a little snippet of information for you from Detective Kowalski down at the fifty-third: turns out our psycho's a lot more organized than we thought.

Kowalski's been on a series of hospital break-ins. He heard about our little problem and gave me a call. Did you know that every single one of our victims is undergoing treatment for some form of ***cancer?***

We ***know*** this because on the same night they were attacked, someone broke in at their respective hospitals an' stole their medical records. There's our connection right ***there.***

What I ***don't*** get is ***this:*** if our boy targets his victims because of something on their medical records, what's the ***point?*** I mean, what's he trying to tell us? Is he angry at ***sick*** people, or something? I mean, what does he ***want?***

It ain't what he ***wants,*** Cap.

It's what he ***needs.***

Question: are you-- or have you ever been-- an alien symbiote?

BURF

Right. Well, thanks for the tip, Fatso.

Don't eat anyone while I'm gone.

Long night, John?

ZZZZZZZ

Thought so.

STOP

I've got to be a lot more careful now that the roof of my apartment has become New York Party Central.

Used to be I only had to worry about being followed home by super-villains. Now I gotta worry about what I *find* when I get here. Even the *stairwell* isn't safe anymore.

Not that anyone in my building would notice, but it's customary to come home via the subway, not the *sky*--

Hey there, neighbor! How you *doin'*--

SLAMM!

Yeah. Nice *talking* to you.

WHAT'S WRONG, EDDIE..?

I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU SUFFER WITHOUT ME, EDDIE. YOU ARE WITHERING AND DYING.

Please... why won't you leave me alone? Why won't you let me have some *peace*--?

IN TIME.

I NEED YOU NOW, EDDIE...

Please... not again. I can't do that *again*--

JUST A SHORT WALK... A FEW MINUTES OF YOUR TIME...

I don't *want* to... not anymore.

I NEED YOU, EDDIE... IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN YOU.

MY ONE AND ONLY PRECIOUS CHILD.

I AM ALSO DYING. OF *HUNGER.*

... yup... *uh-huh...* I see...

... well, what else have you got, Charlie? Is this good news or ***bad?***

I don't know, Neil. I swear this is the craziest case I ever saw in my life.

I kept wondering about the ***wounds,*** y'know? Whether or not they have any relevance, or if they're just the method by which your man puts his victims in a coma.

We thought the victims were comatose as a result of the kidney trauma, but that theory doesn't add up. Those puncture wounds we found only go in as far as the adrenal glands.

There's no damage to the kidneys to speak of--certainly not enough to cause the body to go into shock like this--but each victim seems to have been sucked dry of ***adrenaline.***

It's even missing from their blood and lymphatic systems. Medically, I'd have to say that's ***impossible--***

Waitaminnit... their ***adrenaline?*** Is there any way that ties into the theft of the medical records?

Well, I guess it ***might.*** But if you're looking for specifics, I'd have to ask around.

What'm I ***lookin'*** for, exactly?

You're lookin' for a ***link,*** Charlie. There's more to this than meets the eye.

Brooklyn. Tuesday, 8:10 P.M.

When you can... ***sense*** things like I can, time slows down.

The passing seconds are frozen moments in time; life becomes a series of comic book panels.

This? This is *nothing.*

This is a frightened store clerk an' a couple of hoods about to find themselves on a blind date with my fists.

Come in, number 23, your time is up.

Spider-sense is like freeze frame on a VCR: it seems to slow the action down to a crawl.

Me, I'm ten steps ahead of the game. That's why my jokes are so funny--it feels like I've been working on them for hours.

Every reaction seems rehearsed. I sense a churning of muscles, a breath of air as a pistol is raised. I imagine a tiny squeak of rust as someone begins to tug on a slightly bent trigger...

... I can almost feel a bullet settling in the chamber, making ready to throw itself out of the business end. Point blank. No escape.

BLAM!

And I'm already *gone.*

In these few moments, a million thoughts go by.

THWIP

The guy I'm whacking in the nose is Mikey Sullivan--I sent him down the pike a couple of years ago when he tried to rob a fruit stand.

A tire screeches in the background, but I don't sense it as a danger to me. I hear a pounding noise.

Everything's happening like lightning now: I can smell burning rubber. Still that pounding noise. Someone wants to talk to me, but I'm sprinting away and they're standing in molasses.

NYPD

I hear a voice behind me: "There he goes, officer!" My neckhairs are suddenly on end.

And it's just as I crest the nearest building that my heart begins to slow, and I realize what the noise is.

It's someone *else's* heart trying to out-race mine.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

I can *feel* him. He's in trouble.

YOUR HEART'S BEATING, EDDIE... ARE YOU SCARED?

Yes.

What you're

GOOD.

AAGGHH!!

SHOULD I LEAVE YOU NOW, EDDIE? LET YOU CRASH TO THE GROUND AND DIE? TURN YOU INTO A USELESS PILE OF FLESH AND BONE?

NO, THAT WOULD NOT DO.

OPEN YOUR EYES, EDDIE.

I STILL NEED YOU EDDIE, AND THAT EXQUISITE ADRENALINE YOU SO READILY PRODUCE FOR ME.

LET YOUR FEAR CONSUME YOU.

FEED ME.

GIVE IT TO ME, PRECIOUS CHILD-- WRING THE ADRENALINE FROM EVERY ARTERY AND VEIN.

SQUEEZE IT FROM YOUR SOUL-- EVERY OUNCE YOU HAVE.

AND MORE.

What am I going to *do* with him, Aunt May?

Young boys are *supposed* to be the bane of our existence, Liz, my dear. I sometimes think that's why we were put on this earth.

It's our duty to roll our eyes and wonder how they can grunt for twenty minutes over a three-course meal and spend five hours a night playing fantasy football--

Oh, God, *stop* it... you're making me want to *cry.*

Right about now, Flash would be running about six different teams on Fantasy Nerds dot-com.

I mean... *look* at him--in less than a week, they're going to throw him back out into the big city.

He doesn't even know what *planet* he's on.

It's not that I don't have the resources, Aunt May--I just don't have the *time* anymore. I'm supposed to be running a company, and Flash is a full time job.

God, it's just... I can't see myself letting him go into an *institution*--

You've already done too much, Liz: more than was ever expected of you. Peter's told me exactly what a good friend you've been to this boy, and I've seen it with my own eyes.

But where's he going to *live?* Osborn Industries can take care of the finances, but I can't be around to *do* this anymore -- I've got Normie to think of.

Oh, God... :snff:... this isn't what Flash was supposed to be *doing* right now.

He was supposed to be around his friends, people who *care* about him--

You know, I think I have a rather wonderful *idea.*

Greenwich Village.
Friday, 11:43 P.M.

:psst:...

Relax, dude, it's all in the public domain--

Ehh... one more reason to hate the freakin' internet.

I'm not supposed to be talking to you, Spider-Man-- you know the rules.

Rules, schmules... how about we call it *"interdepartmental cooperation"?* I can pretend to be the F.B.I.: Funny, Buff and Interesting.

Detective *Garrett,* right? I remember you from that Wells Fargo job out at the airport. I left Frankie Stapleton trussed up to a radiator an' you did all the paperwork.

So, I hear you're the detective in charge of the Vampire case--

Yeah? And how'd you hear that, exactly?

I got a name for you, Detective:

Eddie *Brock.*

Eddie Brock? What, you mean that freak who calls himself *Venom?*

The same. A rose by any other name would smell as skanky.

Now, don't ask me how I know. Let's just say I caught professor Eddie in the middle of an unauthorized science experiment down by the train tracks the other day.

You know I've always played straight with you boys, Detective. If you want me to freelance any more useful nuggets of information, you gotta give *me* more to go on.

I dunno... maybe it's nothing. Maybe this Brock guy fancies himself as a *doctor* or somethin'--

Okay, okay... we know what this guy's doing, but we can't figure out *why*. What we *do* know is that he targeted his victims as a result of something he found in their medical records.

We also know he's into adrenaline in a big way -- he's been sucking it out of his victims. Now, only a few people down at the station know about this an' I aim to keep it that way, *capische?*

I don't think it's Eddie Brock at all.

I think it's the *suit.*

It's looking for a new *host.*

#3

RAMOS/FAUCHER

...okay, run that last one by me again--

Which part? It's not as though you ***believe*** me.

Hey, I've seen my share of weird stuff: you work homicide in this city, you get to see some ***crazy*** crime scenes and even crazier people flyin' around in their underpants. No offense.

None taken. Okay... what I'm trying to explain is, this guy Eddie Brock didn't start out as a mutant or anything. He was just an ordinary guy. Something ***happened*** to him to make him this way.

Yeah... I read the profile-- he was some kinda hotshot reporter but then he fudged up some article or other an' he went rogue. That's when he became Venom, right?

Yeah... well, no... not directly. See, I was, uh... okay... this is difficult to explain. See, Venom isn't Eddie Brock alone; it's a combination of him and a very weird creature--

What, you mean like two people in one body?

Keep that up and you'll make detective--that's ***exactly*** what I mean. Only I'm not so certain anymore that Eddie's in control. It's a long story but me and Venom, we have what you might call a psychic link.

Eddie ***becomes*** Venom when the creature attaches itself to his body-- it's a parasite that fits him like a living suit, and it's most definitely not from the Bronx, if you catch my drift.

So, what is it, like, the SARS virus, or somethin'?

Not exactly. It's an ***alien.***

What, you mean *"illegal"* alien or *"little green guy from another planet"* alien?

Guess.

You're right-- I ***don't*** believe you.

C'mon, Detective... would I lie to you? In case you forgot, we had a giant gelatinous blob that tried to take out half the city just last month--

Hey, if I believed half of what they told me on the news, I'd move to Russia. Now, if you'll excuse me, I gotta go.

What, that's *it?* I give you Eddie Brock on a plate, and you give me the cold shoulder? I thought we had an *agreement!*

Sorry, Spider-Man, my hands are tied--

Tied? I don't think you understand what's going on here. Are you even listening to what I'm saying?

I hear you fine, but there's another side to it; it don't matter you can run up the side of tall buildings, you're still a *civilian.*

Now, call me old-fashioned, but it'd be an extreme departure from regulations if I was to encourage a civilian to put himself in harm's way for this investigation. An' I just happen to like doing things by the book.

You never thought of that, *did* you?

Nope.

Look, you know this is no ordinary by-the-book job, Detective. If it *were,* I'd give you what I had and tell you to go for it.

But unless they got something in the police manual about alien shape-shifters from Planet X, I'd say you might want to consider working *with me* on this one--

GROCERY

Yeah, I know... I know...

Tell you what: let's say that *theoretically speaking* I was to *theoretically* draw Venom out by *theoretically* leaking some of this to the press.

That way, we could get the boys geared up to go after Brock, and in the couple of days it took them to agree on procedure, you could take your shot.

Theoretically, I could give you maybe a day or two to clean this mess up, assuming you didn't cause too much damage in the process.

Oh, and one other thing, Spider-Man...

...next time I see you out here like this, you're under *arrest.*

... and in a breaking development, police have issued a warrant for the arrest of this man-- **Eddie Brock**--in connection with the recent spate of South Side assaults known as the **Vampire Mutilations.**

FOX NEWS channel
BIG STORY
EDDIE BROCK ISSUE FOR ARREST
NOW
10:2.5

Brock is the failed newspaper reporter discredited after falsely revealing the wrong killer in the infamous **"Sin Eater"** murders.

An unnamed source at the district attorney's office reveals Brock is known to be mentally unstable and living under heavy disguise. He should be considered armed and dangerous.

Any members of the public with information should contact--

POWER
VOL
CHA
KLUK

GRRAGHH!!

SSHHH!

...Oh, God... I can't...

...I can't take this no more...

WHY DON'T YOU WANT ME ANYMORE?

Please... it ain't fair... didn't I always give you what you wanted? It hurts so much I can't even *think*--

--ah-hechh! ÷KOFF!÷...

Hh-uchh.

...so, I'm coming across the side of the train tracks, right? And there's Venom, just, like ***huge!*** And he's got this old drunk by the throat, and he looks like he's about to ***drain*** the poor guy dry, right?

So, quick as a flash, I'm ***in*** there. And, I mean, this is one ugly scene.

So, we go at it like a couple of heavyweight boxers, an' there's trains running by our faces and noise and shouting and stuff, right?

Peter, dear...

I don't mean to be rude, and I so appreciate you coming over to help me paint, but do you think we could talk about something else? All of this violence is giving me a headache.

I'm sorry, Aunt May-- I guess I was thinking how you said you wanted to know everything about me.

It's just... well, have you ever known someone who could do really good card tricks, but didn't know when to ***stop?***

Oh, I do!

I'm sorry, dear... I suppose this is all part of our ongoing rediscovery. I know you must have a lot to get off your chest.

Your friend, Flash, for instance: That was such an awful thing that happened to him. And now that you've told me the accident wasn't his fault, his situation seems all the more tragic.

It makes me so mad to think of him being targeted by that monster, the Green Goblin, just because of his friendship with you.

That poor child-- confined to a wheelchair in the prime of his life!

This whole thing has been so hard on everyone... on you and dear Liz Osborn in particular. I've seen that girl go through hell on earth for him.

If we're ever going to heal, we're going to have to band together and see him through. Flash is ***everybody's responsibilty*** now--

Yeah, I... waitaminnit...

Don't tell me you...

Promise you won't be upset?

Why did you leave me alone?

You know I can't live without you... Why do you *do* this to me? Haven't I given you everything you've wanted?

EDDIE... I FEEL YOUR PAIN...

I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU SUFFER WHEN I GO... BUT I'M BACK NOW...

YOU'RE SO COLD, EDDIE... DON'T YOU TRUST ME...?

I don't know. I feel so *lost*... like I'm watching someone else's life. They know who we *are* now. Everything's changing.

I feel you, and I feel *him*...

...but I don't know if I can feel *me* anymore.

Life is a balancing act.

You balance work with play, duty with leisure... and in the end, if you're lucky, you might just have tipped the scales in your favor.

That's what people do; we juggle our emotions and our responsibilities, adding weight here and there and casting it off somewhere else.

It's all about helping your friends to shoulder the load.

There he is-- return of the conquering hero.

Oh, Peter... I can't tell you how happy I am you've agreed to let Flash take the downstairs apartment. It's such a weight off my mind to know he has a friend nearby.

What, like I had a *choice*, Liz?

Hey, I'm just kidding. I trust my Aunt May-- she has pretty good instincts.

Besides, it's great to have my bud back in the neighborhood. We've seen a lot of water under the bridge, me an' Flash.

Oh, Peter... this is so ***awesome*** of you guys! This is going to be so good for him-- I just ***know*** it!

Peter, I want you to meet Flash's nurse attendant-- she's going to be here at all times. This is ***Helga.***

Yallo, Piotr! You are Mister Flash's little friend!

Don't even say it, young man--

Boy, is he in for a shock when he wakes up.

Uh, hey... that's quite a handshake you have there, Hagar... ***Helga***--

The rest of the move goes with only a couple of major Big John-related breakages. We might have the most whacked-out neighbors on the block, but we know how to be a community.

I pretend to get tired-- just for appearance's sake-- and I take a moment to watch the beginning of this new chapter.

Aunt May takes a ride back to Queens in Liz's limo-- probably so her neighbors will have something to gossip about when she arrives home in style.

People go upstairs... the moving vans leave... Helga the Horrible goes shopping for steaks... then, it's just a few stragglers...

...and finally, it's just a couple of old college buddies hanging out and shooting the breeze.

Now that it's so peaceful-- now that I have a moment to think-- I get a better sense of what's happening: this is one of those days that defines you, that you never forget.

Third and *long*, huh, Flash?

Split-Z, trips right.

Watch for me downfield, *amigo*.

You have to move beyond your problems if you're ever going to make it past *thirty*.

I throw myself back into the search for Venom, figuring the unwelcome TV exposure will have rattled his big old cage. I'm guessing it won't be that hard to spot a ten-foot alien bloodsucker if I avoid the Village.

But it's hard to see beyond the mask tonight-- memories of the day's events are like voices on the rushing wind.

Me and Flash, duking it out as High School teenagers... laughing, fighting... lifelong antagonists.

I hear whispering in the hum of the traffic below-- long gone days of childhood brought back to life.

Ghosts of the present and ghosts of the past.

And then, suddenly, I'm aware of a faint voice, trying to call out a warning.

It's weird... like waking from surgery and finding yourself alone in a room full of unconscious people.

The voice gets clearer...

I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND ME, SPIDER-MAN. I'VE BEEN TRYING, TOO.

Huh--?

AND NOW I'VE *FOUND* YOU.

THMP

Uhrr...

YOU HEAR ME, SPIDER-MAN... BUT YOU NEVER LISTEN.

WE'RE ONE AND THE SAME-- I KNOW YOUR MIND AND I KNOW YOUR HEART.

Well, that's ten points to you, I guess, Venom... *=uh-hehh=*...

You're a surprise, all right-- just not the kind you think.

The kind of surprise that comes out the business end of a cow.

HRAHH!

A POINT FOR YOU, THEN, SPIDER-FREAK. HRHH... DON'T EXPECT ME TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE--

--Said the bull to the toreador. Man, do you guys ever try a different tactic? Like, say, *thinking?*

RRRRRR

Guess *not.*

NO! NO!

CRASH!!

THUD!

"And here at the intergalactic diving competition, the fifty meter springboard event comes down to the plucky little alien suit from Battle World."

Okay... d'you guys give up now--?

=hh-uchh=... ehh...

BROCK!

That was a pretty impressive pratfall, Eddie. I like how you cleverly used that hard, wooden surface to break your fall--

Get *away* from me!

Hey, it's okay, Brock--

You can't come near me... you don't know what it *does!* The suit... it'll destroy us both--

Where's the suit?

I can't tell you... you're going to *kill* me...

Relax, soldier, I'm not gonna hurt you. I thought you knew me better than that. And here I was thinking we had some kind of psychic link--

You don't *get* it, do you? This *isn't* about *you an' me*-- it ain't been like that for a long while now. I ain't Venom no more!

It's the *suit* that decides everythin' now.

This is just a *trap.*

You worry too much, Eddie. The suit's powerless when it abandons its host--

What the--

I AM ALL THAT EDDIE BROCK IS AND WAS. I AM ALL THAT HE HAS BECOME.

BUT I WANT MORE. I WANT TO GO HOME.

=ukk=

I tried to tell you but you wouldn't listen: the suit's changing-- it's evolved. I'm all tapped out-- it can't use me no more.

All this time I thought it wanted to be with *me*...

"... but it only ever wanted *you*."

#4

Do you know the best way to get rid of the voices in your head?

Bash them real hard against a solid oak door.

My name is Peter Parker, Spider-Man-- I'm the attractive one here in red and blue-- and the black, drippy thing clinging to me like aftershave on a Greek waiter is a parasitic alien that wants to be my special friend.

Usually, the creature spends its time wrapped around a guy named *Eddie Brock.* Together, they go by the name of *Venom,* which even I'll admit is pretty catchy.

Lately, though, the suit seems to have developed a taste for innocent bystanders and guys in spider costumes.

Though not necessarily in that order.

Thirty minutes of struggling for my life and nothing to show for it: the creature's persistent, I'll give it that.

"Peter," the living suit seems to whisper as I struggle to remove it, "I have been waiting for you for a long time."

PETER. WE ARE ONE. YOU ARE THE ONE.

Nnn... I'm not the one! Get the hell off me!

I see a brilliant flash of fire in the sky, like a dream.

Reed, I gotta visual on it-- four o-clock, low...

Keep on it, Johnny. Be careful!

I sense fear in the suit. It screams for me to keep them away.

And I'm fighting the voice and the voice is fighting me...

...and I'm *losing.*

Well, well... look who it ain't--

Fire in the hole!

Get back... you don't understand--

Sure I do: you're the villain formerly known as Venom, currently known as Under Arrest.

Now which do you prefer: fried or boiled?

Torch... it's me... Spider-Man...

...the suit... I can't *control* it--

It's--

--GHH-AHHH!

"Ghh-ahh," Huh? Well, I don't speak Klingon but that sounds pretty bad.

Just hang tight, bro--I'll contain it here!

Torch, no--!

YOU GOTTA LET ME... DO IT MY WAY.

Wait! Listen to me: those bus bars carry about ten trillion volts-- you don't wanna *do* that! You could--

No choice, Johnny... got to risk it...

... if this works you gotta get me to Richards...

Spider-Man, NO--!

FZZZ

FZZAK

One of the voices is silent, for the moment.

Ohh... Goddd...

I hear another: calm, but insistent, like a whisper on the wind...

Dude, that was impressive.

You okay?

Spider-Man...?

...like a dream...

I want to know what happens to a man when he loses his soul.

I think you're becoming confused in your mind, my son. You sound as though you're suffering-- are you ill?

No... yeah... at least... I don't know.

I've been pretty sick lately... but that's not the problem. I think the problem is my *soul*, Father.

I think the demon inside me took it away. I think it gradually stole away little pieces of me while I wasn't paying attention.

I don't feel nuthin' no more. I'm not *me*... I'm just a *shell*.

Our souls are *eternal*, my son. Our Father in heaven would never allow yours to be taken from you.

Perhaps you've lost sight of who you really are, but by the grace of God, you *can* overcome this--

You don't understand, Father. I wish I could explain, but I can't... this is beyond your realm of expertise.

When I was a little kid I always thought I'd grow up to be a good Catholic, you know? I've *needed* to be... but it's gotten harder an' harder over the years.

I want you to know I *tried*, okay? I don't have a lot of time right now to explain-- you'll just have to trust me.

I'm going to leave something on the seat here when I go: it ain't much, but it's everything I been able to keep under the mattress. You've been a real *comfort* to me, Father.

Mm... Such an air of finality. Are you leaving the church, my son?

Something like that.

Welcome back, Spider-Man. How do you feel?

Uhh... like a beehive: parts of me keep buzzing off.

You're wide awake, Spider-man, and lucky to be ***alive*** considering the tremendous shock you forced upon yourself. Do you remember what happened?

We voted to let you keep the mask on, Webs--Reed here didn't want to take advantage of you; I, for one, didn't want to see that ugly mug you've been hiding all these years.

=Uhhf=... someone please tell me I'm still unconscious--

Eddie Brock... he got away... said something about the suit... it's trying to find a new host... said something about ***adrenaline***.

C'n I get a glass of water?

That's not going to be possible right now.

We're going to have to cut this short, Reed. I'm not sure I can contain them much longer.

Is there any way we can transfer them both to a ***restraining*** field?

Spider-Man, this is important: you said Brock mentioned something about ***adrenaline.***

Do you remember the exact context he gave?

I don't think so, darling. The suit has modified its plan of attack from the last time we encountered it. It seems to be transferring our sound waves into Spider-Man's ***neural system.***

If we attempt any kind of sonic separation, the sound waves will be transferred directly to his pain centers.

I'm not sure how the organism became so sophisticated perhaps there's more to it than we understand. If it's evolving, then why isn't it communicating?

Ben... pass me that reso-driver, will you, please?

I still don't see why this is our problem. This guy never brings us nothin' but trouble--

=Uh-ehh=... that's a charming bedside manner you got there, stone-face.

Styoopid Americån electric cån-oopener! Duss not work!

Iss not the *only* one around here!

I tell you, your boy Piotr is såme-- he does not *work!* Lånd of the Frëe... ≒pfft!≒

Wåss only for a coeple hours, iss all I yam asking--

I'm so sorry Peter didn't arrive to take Flash as he'd promised, Helga-- I know how much you need time away from work.

He's a good boy, but he tends to be... *forgetful* at times. I'm sure he meant to be here.

But he promised to take Mister Flash to monster-trück rally! This is his fyîrst time! Iss big disappointment for everyone.

Mister Flåsh *depends* on Piotr!

Don't we all?

Spider-Man, listen to me: I want you to think back. You once told me about a *link* you shared with the suit-- a *psychic* attachment, for lack of a better term--

Reed-- are you suggesting there's some kind of *telepathy* at work here?

Yeah, it's... well, I call it *"spider-sense."* Look, you know I have reasons why I can't reveal my identity to you, Professor Richards, but let's just say I can do more than climb walls and look pretty.

Oh, Brother--

Spider-sense is like... man, how d'you *describe* something like this? It's like a *web,* you know? Like, imagine you're a *spider*-- for real-- and you're surrounded by a web that alerts you whenever anything interesting comes your way. That's what spider-sense *is:* it's a warning signal.

This is incredible. I think I see why the creature has such an attachment to adrenaline--

I don't get it: what does adrenaline have to do with spider-sense?

Everything.

Sue, the week after the Tel Aviv incident-- you remember I became convinced we could determine a connection between your neural pathways and your invisibility factor?

How could I ***forget,*** darling? You had me trussed up in ***electrodes*** for a week.

Spider-Man, a few years ago, I attempted to study the roots of my wife's invisibility powers.

Mmm... I get that, too. It's kinda like a rush to the brain.

The work was crude and incomplete, but it did reveal one curious nugget of information: Sue's powers are accompanied by a ***surge of adrenaline*** to her nervous system.

Exactly. The adrenaline aids the precognitive powers of the mind in a way we've not yet fully come to understand. But even the Soviets knew of a connection as far back as the early nineteen fif--

Reed, as much as I hate to interrupt this science lesson, I think the suit's beginning to stir--

Spider-Man, the creature uses your own nervous system to establish a link. In a sense, it uses your adrenaline as a bonding agent--

--computer: please synthesize an adrenaline blocking agent for me: a glandular sediment, to be administered via hypodermic--

--that's the entire key right there:

The more you fight it, the more it stays ***attached.***

Hold still. This serum will *starve* the creature of its *epinephrine* supply.

-- and *then?*

And then things get interesting...

Memories. Not my own.

Sounds. A fluttering heartbeat. A voice, crying out in darkness.

Wind rushes across a field of diamond grain. Scuttering footsteps below. I hide in the branches of a razor-tree.

And then I *fall.*

I feed, warm and nourished amidst the herd. I am not alone. I am safe. I am happy.

And then, without warning, I'm wrenched away... stuffed in a basin with cold, hard edges...

At last comes *another,* a creature from a distant world that accepts me as its partner.

And in return, I offer it protection.

Protection that it ultimately rejects.

Again I am cast off.

Alone.

Afraid.

I want to go home.

Sue, I think it's working! We're *starving* it--

Nnn... it's *not* working... it's *killing* him! I can't hold it--!

Everybody get down! It's breaking the seal--!

AA-AH!

YUUUU

YIIIIII!

=whuff!=

Get down! Get down!

BOOOOM!

Nice work, professor.

Dear Detective Garrett,

I have been meaning to write to you for some time. Now that things are out in the open, I want to go on record and set a couple of things straight.

Once upon a time I was something. People didn't look at me as Eddie Brock the Accused Killer. They looked at me as Eddie Brock, the Newspaper Man.

But then, there was that deal with the Sin Eater article— I mean, that just tore me up, you know? After it got out that I'd fingered the wrong guy, I couldn't even get a job writing for the Bugle.

You probably don't know this, but I went off the deep end. I was about five minutes from doing the world a favor and ending it all but I couldn't even do that right.

I want you to know I didn't plan for things to go so badly between the cops and me. I always respected what you do, day in and day out.

You boys never get the credit you deserve— I mean it.

I just want you to know I'm sorry for whatever I did wrong.

I guess I'll sign off now. If you ever run into Spider-Man, sock him one for me. He's the reason this whole thing happened the way it did.

I want to wish you the best of luck with your career and family.

Yours Truly,
Eddie Brock

I have a lot of things to think about now.

I think the voices in my head are getting lost in the shuffle.

CLUB

I don't know if I'd have gotten this far if I hadn't gone for help. But I'm going to have to fight the rest of this battle alone.

In a way-- and I mean in a weird, science fiction kind of way-- this is all beginning to make sense.

I always figured the suit wanted me for some reason other than my looks. And now I know:

It was never a choice.

It was an *addiction.*

Somewhere up ahead, a faint heart beats in time with mine. It's something I've never felt before.

Its life force screams for one final time in my mind and then goes silent.

We're both dancing to an unfamiliar tune-- neither of us able to ignore the truth of our situation.

See, you can't avoid a collision that already happened.

hrmm... hh-ecch...

I figured you woulda been here sooner.

How you doin', Eddie?

Been better.

Is this another trap?

I don't know. Check your radar, or whatever it is you do. You sense the damn thing? 'Cause *I* sure as hell don't.

I think it's gone away for good this time.

You know what's weird? I used to come out to this ship when I was a kid. It's been here forever... I guess no one ever worked out how to sell it for scrap an' so it just rusted.

D'you know how that feels? Like you've just sat an' *rusted?*

It's not fair when you don't have the energy to ***hate*** someone no more.

I think it's the ***suit***, Spider-Man-- I think it's taken out all of the pieces that used to be Eddie Brock.

I'm supposed to feel this hatred for you, but for the life of me I can't remember ***why.***

Oh, God... ah-hehh... =hucch!=...

I don't think it's gonna come back to me this time. I think you've given it a taste of ***steak*** an' now I'm just dried up ***beef jerky.***

You know what that ***means,*** Spider-Man?

I think it means you're on your own, Brock, just like you were before. And since you're a wanted felon, that means you get to spend the rest of your life in an enclosed space with a very large man named Bubba--

Ha! You gotta be kiddin' me, right? You're gonna send me to ***jail?***

Oh, Lord... =hhech!=... you munst be joking...

...I mean, you seriously think this is about me doin' ***time?***

What's so funny about that, Eddie? You got a golf outing planned for next week or something?

No...

...I've got *cancer.*

#5

926

When did you find out?

About the cancer? A while ago-- few years, maybe.

I asked the doc what were my chances.

He gave me three months to live an' told me to put my affairs in order.

"So, I asked him was it going to be *painful?* And he went real quiet for a moment. Finally he said, 'Well, it's not going to be a picnic."

See, the problem isn't being told you've got *cancer*-- it's being told it's *inoperable.* That's what really bites you on the butt.

I guess that's why I threw myself back into my writing; at least it gave me somethin' to *focus* on, you know?

The day I fingered the "Sin Eater" in my column, that was the first time I'd actually felt worth something in months.

An' then *you* went an' proved it was someone *else.*

Listen, Eddie, you know I couldn't have *known* about your situation. You were about to send an innocent man to his death--

My uncle died of cancer.

It turned him into a shell. Took away his will to live two years before he finally caved in. Watching him die like that, it was hard to remember the guy he used to be.

I promised myself I would never let that happen to me.

"An' so, when I realized my life an' my career was in ruins, I decided to end the pain right there. I went to the church to ask forgiveness.

Please, Lord... I want you to understand... I'm not strong enough to face this by myself.

Why'd you have to *test* me this way?

"I was going to kill myself that night.

"But God had a *different* plan for me."

You've got it all wrong, Eddie-- even I can't beat cancer.

What's that supposed to mean--?

It means I feel as bad as the next guy about what happened to you. But where do you attach the ***blame,*** Eddie? How come it's gotta be someone's ***fault*** that you got sick?

God, you're such a typical crook.

"It was my childhood, your Honor. It was my boss. It was my neighbor's dog."

Or ***my*** fault, right, Eddie? But never ***yours.***

All this hatred you had for me, that was just your fear of the cancer--

Man, you don't get it, do you?

Before my diagnosis I was taking anxiety medicine for hypertension. I always figured it was my deadlines an' stuff that made me so jumpy all the time.

Turns out I got this tumor in my adrenal glands called a pheochromocytoma-- it's a kind of cancer that secretes ***epinephrine*** as a by-product.

The symbiote took one sniff of me an' figured I was the ***adrenaline motherlode.***

See?

Wait a minute--you're saying the suit fed off of your cancer? And that's why it's been targeting cancer patients--

Yeah, but it's freaking out-- it could never find a compatible host.

Not since it tasted ***you.***

And then it hits me; *this* is the reason Eddie Brock has hated me for so long.

It's why Eddie turned me into his personal demon; it's why his hatred for me grew like a cancer.

He knew from the start the symbiote only wanted *me*...

...and he was afraid of what would happen if I accepted.

=cough= =hack= =cough=

Jeez, Eddie, take it easy. Are you gonna be okay?

≥kaff!≤... ohh, Godd...

...*≥ah-hechh≤...* I can't breathe...

I... *≥hh-ucch≤...* I don't know...

≥hh-echh≤... I can't think straight... *≥ehh≤...*

...it's the suit... *≥ah-uhh≤...* it's taken away a piece of my mind...

... you remember how it used to be, Spider-Man... *≥ucch≤...* how we used to be able to hear each other all the time--even in our sleep?

I could always hear you... *≥ehh≤...* somewhere in the back of my head...

... but I don't hear *nuthin'* no more.

I think it has somethin' to do with our adrenaline... I think that's how the suit makes our minds connect...

Only the right kind of adrenaline can make it work--

KAFF KAFF

Hang tight, Eddie. I'm gonna get you to a hospital--

Hospital? ⸗ah-huchh⸗... even *you* can't be that dumb, can you?

The suit doesn't just want us for adrenaline...

⸗ah-hehh⸗

...don't you see what it *needs*--?

Okay, so what--

Eddie?

Maybe you're right--maybe we don't need the Emergency Room 'cause you're already as good as dead.

But you just hang tight for me, okay, pal? I got a better idea.

We gotta get you back inside the suit.

And so once again, dear friends, my situation seems ironic in the same way a falling anvil seems ironic to the head of a cockroach.

I find myself jumping across the city trying to save the life of a three-hundred-pound nutcase who just happens to hate my guts.

And I can't help wondering what's going to happen if I *succeed?*

The math is simple: *Eddie* plus *symbiote* equals *Venom.* Venom equals *trouble.*

By saving one life I might be endangering a thousand others. So why don't I just stop here and let nature take its course?

Because I never claimed to be anybody's judge or jury. I just get to save people.

I'm Spider-Man, and that's what I *do.*

He's close. Do you feel him?

Spider-Man... *please*... you gotta put me down...

I don't wanna die this way, Spider-Man.

Not without my soul.

It'd be worse than going to Hell. You die without your soul, you don't get your chance to be judged...

...*shhh*... like Peer Gynt... into the melting pot... like you never even existed...

Ah-huchh...

Eddie, listen to me. I won't let that happen, okay? Just stay with me--

ah-huhh... *hehh*... didn't no one ever tell you not to make promises you can't ***keep***?

...it's gotta happen now... the suit's running out of time...

...you need to know--

Need to know *what?* What are you trying to tell me, Eddie?

I'm *cold.*

He doesn't have to be dead.

You could save him if you wanted to. It's not too late, even now.

DO NOT WANT BROCK. NEVER DID.

ONLY *YOU.*

You've got three minutes before his brain catches up with the rest of him. So make a decision pretty quick, pal, because in life there are no second chances.

I feel what *you* feel, remember? I know how desperate you've become. Without a host, you're dying too, aren't you?

DYING? YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND--

You'd be surprised how often I hear that.

THE NEXT TIME I COMBINE WILL BE MY *LAST*.

TO COMBINE WITH THE FLESH OF EDDIE BROCK IS TO ACCEPT HIS CANCER; AN ETERNITY OF DISEASE AND SUFFERING.

We have a saying on this planet. *"Better the devil you know than the one you don't."*

One minute and thirty seconds... are you prepared to *die*?

NO.

OHH!

Aa-ahh!

KRAK!

Shoulder's dislocated... I can tell immediately.

It means the creature is a lot more desperate than I thought. It also means I'd better stall for time.

WILL NOT DIE. CANNOT DIE. NOT NOW.

Listen to me: you're running out of time. Maybe I'm first prize in the adrenaline stakes but if you don't settle for second, you'll have killed yourself and Brock for no reason.

Tch. Stubborn.

KRAK!

Uhh... thirty seconds by my count. After that, Brock's put to bed with a shovel and you're on your own. Take it or leave it.

NO! YOU STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

CANNOT HAVE BROCK. MUST HAVE YOU.

A CHILD GROWS WITHIN ME.

"A child"? You mean you're pregnant--

UHFF!

PLEASE, SPIDER-MAN... YOU MUST ACCEPT. LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.

WILL GIVE YOU SO MUCH IN RETURN.

... uhh... ehh... **sure**--for as long as I can keep up the supply of adrenaline... *ah-ehh*...

You're not a symbiote... you're a ***parasite***--

THWAK!

ARRH!

BROCK IS DISEASED-- HE CANNOT SUSTAIN US.

YOU ARE THE ONE.

Uhh... become plant food for the pansy from Planet X? That's not much of a choice.

YOU MISSED. YOU ARE WEAK.

THWIP

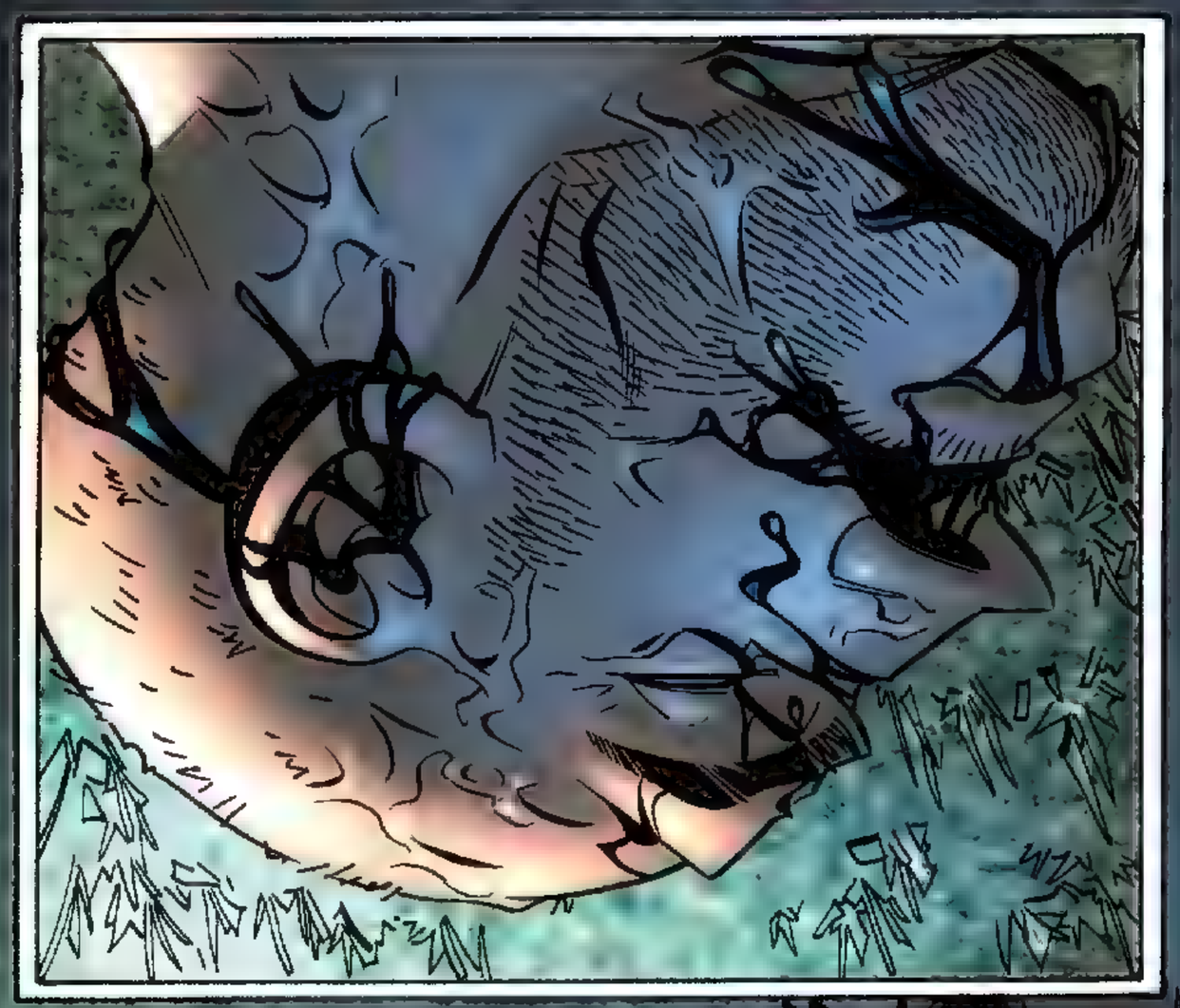
I never miss.

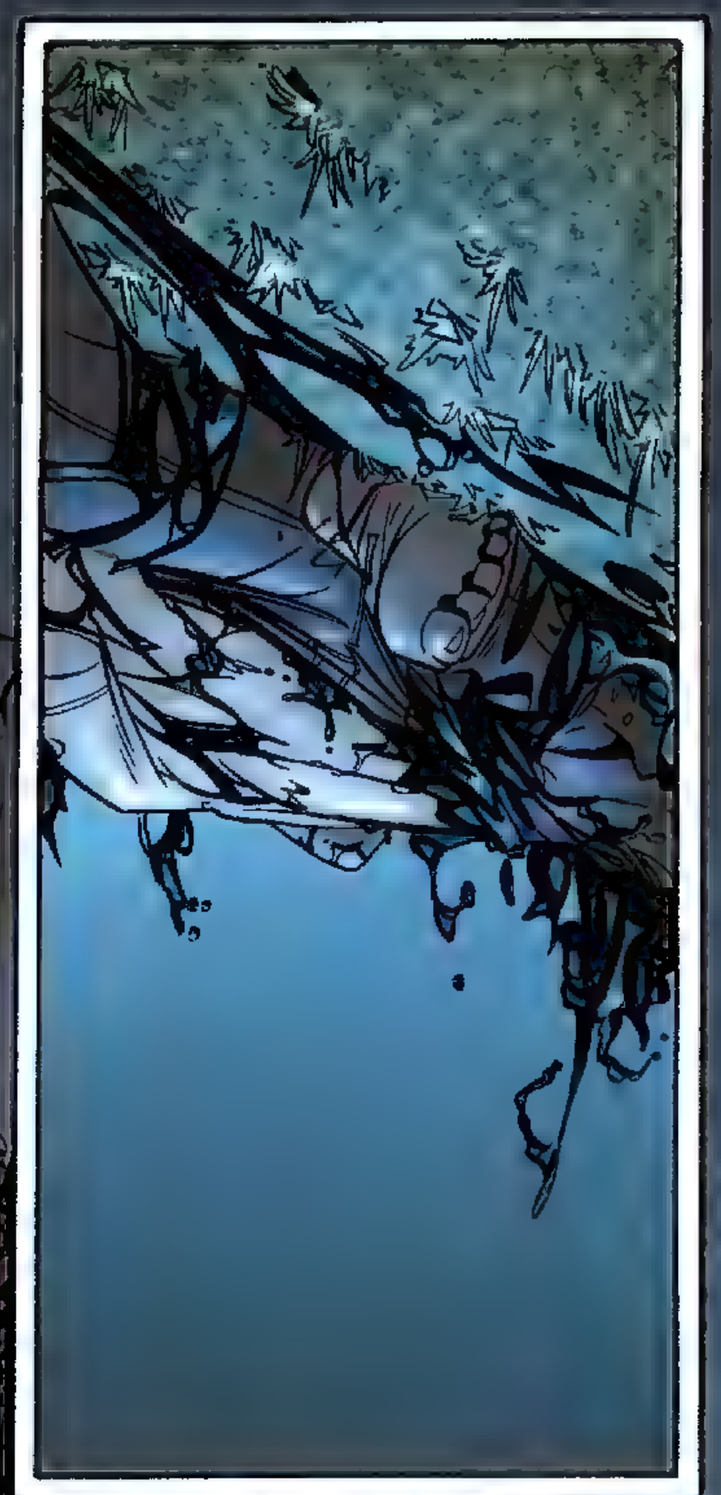
WHAT—?

FWAPP!

NO.

Catch!





YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE, SPIDER-MAN.

YOU HAVE GIVEN US PAIN. IN PAIN WE WILL EXIST FOREVER.

IN SICKNESS AND IN CANCER.

A FATE WORSE THAN LIFE.

I wish I could say it's good to have you back, Venom. You're as welcome as a rectal prolapse.

YOU! CONDEMNED US. TO CANCER. FEAR.

HATRED.

YOU STOLE FROM US. FROM OUR CHILD.

YOU WILL PAY.

WHEN THE TIME COMES.

It's only as the wind and the rumble of nearby aircraft hits me that I begin to understand. I thought I knew, and I never *did.*

I always thought I was trying to play hero. Maybe all along I've been trying to play God.

I hear two separate minds inside a single body. Eddie and the symbiote are reunited for good now, and they share a new purpose; to *protect* their *offspring.*

As Venom, they slip away under cover of night, headed for an uncertain future along with the rest of us.

I can't help wondering, what have I done?

Did I just solve a problem, or create one?

Did I just save Eddie Brock's life?

Or did I just send him to Hell?

The End?

VENOM'S BACK!

ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR SPIDER-MAN VILLAINS OF ALL TIME IS BACK AND... DEADLIER THAN EVER!

While Peter Parker wrestles with feelings of remorse over the injury of his longtime friend, Flash Thompson, a series of assaults in New York City has left seemingly unconnected victims in a strange coma. The half-human, half-alien symbiote known as Venom is on the loose, and seems to be attacking people at random. But what does he want, and what will it take for Spider-Man to defeat him?

Collecting *Spectacular Spider-Man #1-5*, written by Paul Jenkins (*Peter Parker: Spider-Man*) and illustrated by Humberto Ramos (*Peter Parker: Spider-Man*).

MARVEL